

DRAGON MOSQUITO CONTROL INC.

JUNE 2020 UPDATE

Moderate drought conditions were declared throughout southern New Hampshire in June. Then nearly three inches of rain fell in just as many days. Hot and dry summer weather is a major factor leading to an increase of West Nile Virus (WNV). Mosquitoes can flourish when heavy rains follow a dry period. So in wet or dry weather, we need to stay vigilant. While WNV mosquitoes can develop in a variety of fresh water habitats, four species utilize catch basins. Many catch basins retain water and produce abundant mosquitoes making them a focus during the summer months.

Dragon crews began treating catch basins in June and July. The process requires crews to drive slowly along the sides of roads dropping Natular, a product derived from a naturally occurring bacterium, into the catch basin. We are very conspicuous during this process and are often approached by well-meaning residents that accuse us of throwing trash in the catch basins. Rest assured, we aren't littering. These treatments can stop mosquito larvae from emerging into adults that can spread disease to humans.

Greenhead flies hatch in July. Neither repellent or insecticide works well to keep greenheads at bay. Fly traps are the best option. Dragon has set out hundreds of traps on the salt marshes throughout the seacoast to be ready for their predictable emergence. Every fly that is caught is one less that will be trying to bleed you dry this summer.

Mosquito borne disease has already been detected this summer. On July 2nd, Health and Human Services (DHHS) announced that an adult from Loudon, NH tested positive for Jamestown Canyon Virus (JCV) . This is the first detection of a mosquito-borne disease in the State this year. JCV is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. There are no vaccines to prevent JCV and the State Lab doesn't yet test mosquitoes for JCV. In addition, Eastern Equine Encephalitis and West Nile Virus have already been found in Massachusetts.

Trapping of adult mosquitoes for disease testing is underway. The State Lab in Concord, while overburdened with Covid-19, started testing mosquitoes for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and WNV as of July 1st. Usually, disease isn't identified in mosquitoes until later in July or August. The State issues a press release when EEE and WNV are first detected in mosquitoes. Subsequent arboviral disease test results and the arboviral risk map can be found at <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/arboviral/results.htm>. We update residents on Twitter whenever mosquitoes test positive for disease in NH at <https://twitter.com/DragonMosquito>.

What can you do to reduce mosquito populations and protect yourself from diseases that mosquitoes spread? Mosquitoes require water to complete their life cycle. Check for and dump out standing water around your home each week where mosquitoes can lay eggs. We know mosquitoes won't be practicing physical distancing. Wearing light colored, loose fitting clothing can help. Mosquitoes are more attracted to dark clothing and most can bite through tight clothes. When practical, wear long sleeves and pants. Choose a mosquito repellent that has been registered by the Environmental Protection Agency. Registered products have been reviewed, approved, and pose minimal risk for humans when used according to label. Information about repellents can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents>.

Respectfully Submitted,
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